



Senator  
**Brian Weinstein**  
 41st LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

## Senator Brian Weinstein

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- Early Learning, K-12  
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- Transportation

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Dear Neighbors,

As this legislative session gets into full swing, my priority is making Washington the best place to live, work and raise a family. That means focusing on our public schools and our state colleges and universities. It means making sure our roads are safe and efficient, and providing a wide variety of environmentally friendly transportation options. And it means providing affordable health care for our most vulnerable citizens.

In a time when we must make up an estimated \$2 billion budget shortfall, we lawmakers must make smart choices and stay focused on what matters most to Washington's families.

This newsletter lets you know what I'm working on in Olympia, but I'm equally interested in hearing from you. Inside, you will find details about what I've been working on this session, as well as a quick survey that I hope you will take a moment to complete and return to my office.

I'm honored to serve as the voice of the 41st Legislative District, and I encourage you to keep in touch by phone, letter or e-mail.

Sincerely,

Brian Weinstein



Sen. Brian  
 Weinstein is sworn  
 in by Supreme  
 Court Justice  
 Charles Johnson.

## Giving our students the tools to succeed

As you know, I care deeply about our state's public education system, and I'm pleased to have hit the ground running in my efforts to support our schools. Every student – regardless of age, aspiration or socioeconomic status – deserves access to high-quality programs that help them succeed. The students graduating out of our K-12 schools must compete in the global workplace and our job is to give them the tools to do so.

My first move upon arriving in Olympia was to introduce a bill calling for a comprehensive study of the way we fund our public schools. Believe it or not, such a study hasn't been done in more than a quarter of a century. Students today come to school with so many different learning needs. We need to make sure we are using every public school dollar efficiently and to make sure that we are adequately addressing special education and transportation needs.

I've also introduced a measure that would require school districts that offer sex education to follow recent state guidelines on such programs. If a district chooses to offer sex education, then that district has an obligation to teach responsible, medically accurate facts. The bill would ensure that such programs emphasize abstinence, but not to the exclusion of other family planning options.

Local school districts are facing their own tight budgets, and I'm co-sponsoring a bill to do away with the outdated 60 percent supermajority currently required to pass school levies. I've heard of school districts that miss that requirement by just a handful of votes, and as a result have to shave millions of dollars from their budgets. A simple majority of

voters is all that's required to build sports stadiums or jails – our schools should get to play by the same rules.

## Moving past the gridlock

There's no question that traffic is a universal headache – and one that can be particularly troublesome here in the Puget Sound region. During the past year, the average Washington driver sat in traffic for the equivalent of an entire work week. That's a drain on our economy and a drain on our personal lives.

Our roadways are crucial for moving people and goods throughout the region. As the need for mass transit becomes more and more of a reality in the Seattle metro area, we need to be thinking about how to integrate a seamless network from the eastside to Seattle.

The answer does not lie in simply building more roads. We should embrace a variety of transportation choices, and that is something I'm encouraging. We should be investing in high-quality mass transit options and find other creative, common-sense ways to end the gridlock and improve safety on our state's roads.

Did you know that under current law, someone who is arrested for drunk driving can be released and allowed to get back behind the wheel while still impaired? I've introduced a bill that would require law enforcement officials to impound for 12 hours the vehicle of anyone arrested for drunk driving. It makes no sense to give such offenders the opportunity to get back on our roads while they're still intoxicated. This is one way I'm working to make our roads safer.

## Creating a healthier Washington

We all want to live in the healthiest state possible, with clean, livable communities and access to quality health care. Several measures this session aim to achieve just that.

I've signed on to a bill that would strengthen Washington's motor vehicle emissions standards, reducing air pollution in our state considerably. Since vehicle emissions contribute more than half of the total air pollution generated in Washington, the move to cleaner cars is the single most effective way to reduce the risks of exposure across the state.

We can also clean up our air by avoiding the very real dangers of secondhand smoke. I'm supporting a bill that would do that by prohibiting smoking in public places. Permitting smoking in places where children might be present – such as skating rinks and bowling alleys – is

*(continued on back)*

### Join Sen. Weinstein at town hall meetings

Along with 41st Legislative District Reps. Judy Clibborn and Fred Jarrett, I will host two town hall meetings on **Saturday, March 19**. These events are a great way to update the community on what we've been doing in Olympia, and for you to ask questions and let us know what issues are important to you. Please try to stop by.

- **Bellevue City Hall Council Conference Room**  
11511 Main Street  
9:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- **Kennydale Elementary (Renton)**  
1700 NE 28th St.  
1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

# 41st District Session Transportation Survey

Shade circles like this ● Not like this ☑ ☒  
Please do not write inside the margins.

**Roads.** We take them for granted, yet we all depend on them — nowhere more so than on the eastside. Your opinions matter to me as I determine which transportation projects and measures matter most to residents of the 41st Legislative District. Please take a moment to answer the following questions, and return the survey to my office so that I can understand your priorities.

**1.** The Washington State Department of Transportation has selected a tunnel as the preferred alternative for replacing the deteriorating Alaskan Way Viaduct. It is estimated that building the tunnel will cost between \$3.4 billion and \$4 billion, and will take seven or eight years to complete. Public input will be sought during the design process. The viaduct is used by an estimated 110,000 drivers per day. How important is replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct?

Voter 1	Voter 2	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Somewhat important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Not important

**2.** One of Puget Sound's main arteries for transporting people and goods is SR 520. The SR 520 Evergreen Point Bridge provides a critical link across Lake Washington, but after weathering wind storms, earthquakes, and traffic accidents, the bridge needs to be replaced. A replacement would offer a safer new bridge that includes a dedicated HOV lane to move transit and car pool traffic. How important is replacing the SR 520 bridge?

Voter 1	Voter 2	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Somewhat important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Not important

**3.** State transportation officials are studying ways to improve Interstate 405. Plans are in the works to widen the freeway in each direction and make it more transit-friendly with additional carpool and transit lanes, more bus service, and added park and ride lots. The idea is to improve I-405 so that traffic stays on the freeway and doesn't spill onto residential roads. How important is it to make improvements to I-405?

Voter 1	Voter 2	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Somewhat important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Not important

**4.** Several entities are working to bring light rail service to downtown Seattle. The idea behind these trains is to provide a safe and reliable way to carry people around the metro area while minimizing congestion and pollution associated with traffic. Future phases could include bringing rail lines through the north end of Mercer Island and to the eastside. How important is it to bring light rail service to the eastside?

Voter 1	Voter 2	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Somewhat important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Not important

**5.** An effort is underway this session to limit cell phone use while driving. A measure in the Senate would allow drivers to use cell phones only in the case of emergency or for reporting accidents unless they are "hands-free" devices. Studies have shown that drivers who are talking on cell phones show significantly delayed response times. How important is it to limit cell phone use while driving?

Voter 1	Voter 2	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Somewhat important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Not important

**6.** What is the best way to fund improvements to our regional roadways?

Voter 1	Voter 2	
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Statewide gas tax
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Regional gas tax
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Vehicle licensing fees
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Other _____

What other transportation concerns do you have?

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Please detach survey page at fold, affix a stamp, tape the survey shut and mail it to my Olympia office. Thanks.

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

*(continued from page 2)*

unconscionable. We also are putting employees of restaurants, bars and other public places in unnecessary danger by subjecting them to secondhand smoke.

Our health care system needs help. Costs are going up at unsustainable rates – two to three times the rate of inflation. As a result, the cost of health care is hurting a whole lot of people. In 2002, more than half a million Washington residents were uninsured. This is unacceptable.

This session, efforts are being made to help small businesses buy into health care at more affordable prices. And we are looking to expand health care for children.

Gov. Christine Gregoire has agreed not to implement Medicaid premiums that would have kicked thousands of children from low-income families off the program. That was a good first step.

Several communities in our state are facing huge cuts in crucial mental health services, leaving those who need them the most without a safety net. All of our communities benefit when we provide proactive treatment for the estimated 300,000 Washington residents who suffer from mental illness. A measure working its way through the Legislature calls for health plans to provide mental health services on the same basis as they do other health care services.



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